

A Short Story Dispenser and Writing Workshops to Support the Cancer Patient Care Pathway

Côme Sibieude, Christophe Sibieude, Laura Le Saux, Camille Baudry, Louis Claret, Sophie Lantheaume

Introduction

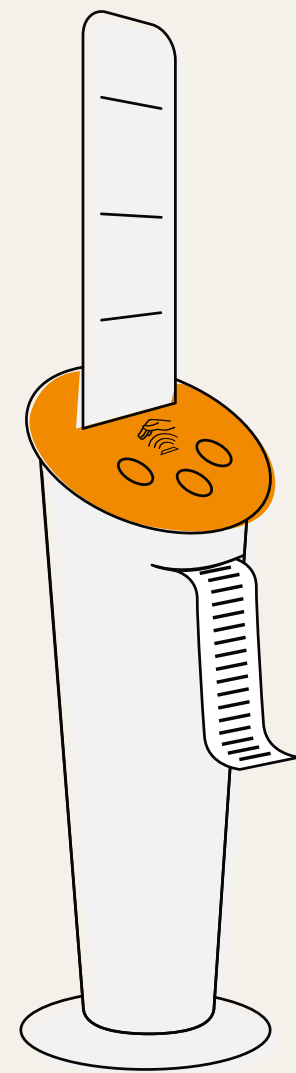
The number of new cancer cases in France is sharply increasing, reminding us that a significant number of people are **passing through the premises of healthcare facilities** (INCa, 2023).

While one of the missions of hospitals is to ensure the best care for patients, their goal is also to provide, the **most pleasant as possible, hospital living conditions**.

For this purpose, it is **important to bring culture into the hospital**, in whatever form. Short Edition created the **Short Story Dispenser (SSD)** in 2016: poems, short stories – to be read in one go – in 1, 3, or 5 minutes.

Deprived of magazines and companions since the Covid crisis, **patients in waiting rooms or undergoing treatment have limited choices for entertainment**. In 2021, an SSD was thus implemented in the chemotherapy services of four hospitals in France*, receiving broad support from both patients and caregivers.

In 2023, Short Edition, with the support of the Ministry of Culture and the National Book Center (CNL), set up **writing workshops within healthcare facilities, benefiting from an SSD**.



Inauguration of the Short Story Dispenser, acclaimed by caregivers.



Writing workshop, a space of escape for patients.



Feedback from the writing workshops: sharing, reading and emotion!

Objective

The objective of this feedback is to **report the benefits of the writing workshops on the management of emotions, the experience of the care pathway, and the social support of cancer patients**.

Organization and Methodology

Population: Cancer patients at the Drôme Ardèche Private Hospital, the François de Baclesse Center, the Hospital Center of the Montargoise Agglomération, and the La Pitié Salpêtrière Hospital.

Tools: Pre/post-writing workshop questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Organisation: The writing workshops were organized in coordination with the authors, medical teams, and Short Edition. The duration of the workshops is approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes. At the end of the 3 sessions, the patients' works were shared during a feedback session and published on the Short Story Dispensers, to be read by other patients or caregivers visiting the facility.

Results

Thirty-four cancer patients responded to the evaluations (participation rate of 73.33%). The initial results show that:

- **56%** felt that the workshops helped them better share their emotions, 65% felt more at ease.
- **83%** felt that the writing workshops improved their hospital experience.
- **86%** felt that the workshops gave them the opportunity to feel less alone and to create bonds with peers.

Conclusion

Workshops will be offered again in 2024 and 2025, with the same evaluations. The data will then confirm these **positive effects in terms of expression and emotion management regarding the disease, improvement of patients' perception of their care pathway, and creation of social bonds**. As mediation, the writing workshops allow the patient to take an active role in their care pathway.